

Published and Copyright (c) 1999 - 2002  
All Rights Reserved

Atari Online News, Etc.  
A-ONE Online Magazine  
Dana P. Jacobson, Publisher/Managing Editor  
Joseph Mirando, Managing Editor  
Rob Mahlert, Associate Editor

Atari Online News, Etc. Staff

Dana P. Jacobson -- Editor  
Joe Mirando -- "People Are Talking"  
Michael Burkley -- "Unabashed Atariophile"  
Albert Dayes -- "CC: Classic Chips"  
Rob Mahlert -- Web site  
Thomas J. Andrews -- "Keeper of the Flame"

With Contributions by:

Kevin Savetz  
R. Wayne Arenz

To subscribe to A-ONE, change e-mail addresses, or unsubscribe,  
log on to our website at: [www.atarinews.org](http://www.atarinews.org)  
and click on "Subscriptions".  
OR subscribe to A-ONE by sending a message to: [dpj@atarinews.org](mailto:dpj@atarinews.org)  
and your address will be added to the distribution list.  
To unsubscribe from A-ONE, send the following: Unsubscribe A-ONE  
Please make sure that you include the same address that you used to  
subscribe from.

To download A-ONE, set your browser bookmarks to one of the  
following sites:

<http://people.delphiforums.com/dpj/a-one.htm>  
<http://www.icwhen.com/aone/>  
<http://almag.atari.org>  
Now available:  
<http://www.atarinews.org>

Visit the Atari Advantage Forum on Delphi!  
<http://forums.delphiforums.com/m/main.asp?sigdir=atari>

=~::~~::~~::~=

~ Apple Shows New Stuff! ~ People Are Talking! ~ New Steem Update!  
~ Gator Is Handcuffed! ~ Apple's .Mac Web! ~ Can IE Be Unseated?!  
~ Apple's Jaguar Ready! ~ MSN Browser Revamped! ~ Do Re Atari Online!  
~ Multimedia Windows XP ~ Atari Swap and Sale! ~ New ASMA Released!

-\* HP Fires 2 For E-mail Abuse! \*-  
-\* Hacker Software Human Rights Weapon \*-  
-\* Hacker Group Targets Countries Who Censor \*-

=~==~==

->From the Editor's Keyboard "Saying it like it is!"  
"\*\*\*\*\*"

Another beautiful week, weather-wise! Sure, we had a HOT day here and there, but that's to be expected around here. And it's supposed to be an incredible weekend, with lower humidity. I don't mind the heat, but keep that humidity low!

Business news continues to be horrible. Scandals, economy, and lack of consumer confidence seem to be the contributing factors. The bright side, at least in the computing field, appears to be Apple. News from MacWorld has been positive even though the company itself is showing lower margins. It's nice to see an underdog doing better these days.

I don't have a lot to write about this week, for a change! It's been quiet, other than the woes of the economy and how it's affecting everything. You read and hear enough about that every day that I won't even begin to try and discuss it - much less understand it all myself. For me, I just do what I can to enjoy each day as it comes. Give me a warm summer day with a slight sea breeze and I'm happy. I've got my family and my health - I'm not greedy; and I can live with those!

Until next time...

=~==~==

Steem v2.3

Version 2.3 of Steem has been released. There are lots of changes, here is a taste of what is new:

-- Bug Fixes --

. Prefetch bug fixed thanks to Sebastien Molines (Subutteo, Anomaly Megademo protection)

. Absolute mouse button flags thanks to Sebastien Molines (Cochon Qui Ait)

- . VAP reload timing (some ULM fullscreens)
- . MFP clock (more ULM fullscreens, Captain Blood)
- . Tighter top overscan timings (NeoShow)
- . PSG register masking (FOF menus, BBC Mindbomb screen)
- . HBL pending past next HBL bug
- . Obsession patch
- . STE shifter screen widening feature/bug (Obsession)
- . Small asr.1 flag bug (Medway Boys 75)
- . Fixed lots of snapshot timing bugs (Lethal Xcess)

---- New Features ----

- . Extended monitor resolutions
- . Paste text into ST
- . RAR archive support
- . Independent left-right shift in shortcuts and joysticks
- . Automatic fast forward on disk access option
- . Screenshot format option (Windows only, needs FreeImage library)
- . Press ST Key -> for keypad enter
- . Auto update links
- . XSteem: 8-bit colour depth support
- . XSteem: External devices (experimental)
- . XSteem: Screenshots
- . Debug: Added step over button

<http://www.blimey.strayduck.com/>

## De Re Atari Online

The full text and program code from De Re Atari, a classic guide to effective Atari 8-bit programming, is now available at [www.atariarchives.org/dere/](http://www.atariarchives.org/dere/)

It includes downloadable program code and the programmer's reference card that accompanied the original book.

This is the eighth online book made available by AtariArchives.org.

## ASMA 2.4 Released

The ultimate Atari XL/XE music collection has been updated to v2.4. This update adds 94 new songs and fixes several credits errors. The total number of songs in the archive is 1480. Get the archive and players for various platforms at the [archive homepage](#).

<http://asma.atari.org>

$$= \sim = \sim = \sim =$$

```
->A-ONE User Group Notes!    -   Meetings, Shows, and Info!
```

# Atari Swap and Sale 2002

2002 \*\*\* Atari Enthusiasts of Columbus, Ohio Annual Swap and Sale \*\*\* 2002  
All Atari, used computing and game platforms, electronics, etc. are invited

September 14, 2002  
Oakland Park Community Center  
980 Lenore Ave.  
Columbus, Ohio

9:00 a.m. through 3:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time

Admission \$4.00/ person to maximum of \$8/ family  
Sales tables: \$8.00, which includes one admission

<http://www.angelfire.com/oh4/acec/acec.html>

Please contact [rarenz@columbus.rr.com](mailto:rarenz@columbus.rr.com) if you wish to be placed on/ remain on our mailing lists. We are trimming mailing costs.

Please contact for further information.

$$= \sim = \sim = \sim =$$

PEOPLE ARE TALKING  
compiled by Joe Mirando  
joe@atarinews.org

Hidi ho friends and neighbors. Mother Nature is messin' with me again! It's

been hot here... to quote Robin Williams in "Good Morning, Vietnam",  
"Dammmmmnn hot!"

And I swear, the next person who looks at me and says "It's not the heat. It's the humidity" is going to get a crack in the mouth for sharing that bit of arcane wisdom!

Yes, as you can see, the warm weather doesn't really agree with me. That makes me... normal. <grin>

I find that, as I get older, I get less tolerant. I've always been very open minded, but as time goes on, I seem to be less and less willing to consider things that are outside my realm of experience. I'm trying like heck to keep my mind elastic and pliable, but it's getting harder and harder to do. I guess it's fitting then that my personal website is <http://www.MeanOldBastard.Com>.

Now, I'm not prejudiced or <shudder, shudder> republican, but I seem to be less and less able to cut people the slack that they seem to be able to get in an endless supply from every other point on the planet. "Slack", as I see it, has become a very potent and addictive drug. Once you have a "slack high", you want more and more.

There are, of course, those who just don't get the thrill... the buzz of this drug, but there seem to be fewer and fewer of us every year. The major problem is availability. While there are some places where you just can't get a fix, there are many more where you can.

As with most drugs, there are those who have a legitimate need for this drug and can't get it. They are forced trod along in search of a dose to cure an ill while they doing the best they can without it.

The difference between this drug and most others is that there's no regulation and no quality control system in place for legitimate production. There is no government guideline on 'Slack', so the usefulness, potency, and reliability are always unknown factors.

Yes, I still provide 'Slack' to those who genuinely need it, but I've stopped just handing it out to anyone who would rather have a "Slack attack" than do something constructive.

Well, let's get on with the news, hints, tips, and info available every week on the UseNet.

From the comp.sys.atari.st NewsGroup  
=====

Mark Duckworth asks about his Link2:

"I was wondering if anyone would happen to have any advice for me. I recently purchased a new Mega STe to replace the fried one I already had and apparently the Link got taken down too. It works and the light lights up but it doesn't get detected by ICD's software."

Edward Baiz tells Mark:

"I think I had the same problem if I understand you correctly. I

installed the Link 2 in my STe. A friend of mine made me the SCSI cable I needed. I turned everything on, the Link 2's light came on, but the hard drive would not boot up. It was not being recognized by the Link 2. It turned out the problem was the cable itself. You might check the connections. My friend just made me a new cable. It seems the first time the SCSI connectors were installed a little mis-aligned."

Mark replies to Edward:

"No go. I tried like 6 cables and about 30 different drives. I was really thoroughly testing it before declaring it broken."

When Citrad Fertr mentions AranyM (Atari Running on Any Machine), Lyndon Amsdon asks:

"I thought the Windows versions weren't as up-to-date as the Linux one. Is it optimised well? I only have Pentium 1 233MMX, Steem wouldn't work at acceptable speed. Gemulator benchmarked though at 3 times faster than a Falcon but won't run this particular piece of software. I basically need ST/TT speed."

Citrad tells Lyndon:

"As far as I know, the windows versions are synced with the official releases. Anyway, the windoze versions are fully usable."

I think that on your machine the AranyM should be at least as fast as an plain Falcon with FPU and graphics card."

Djordje Vukovic jumps in and adds:

"Yes, those emulators are like that- e.g. I could not get DynaCADD to work in Gemulator, but in TOSbox it (at least) runs (for a while before freezing) and I remember in Pacifist it worked quite ok. AES4.1 did not like Gemulator either, but worked nice in TOSbox. On the other hand, Prospero fortran worked fine in Gemulator, but in TOSbox compilation of anything involving floating-point numbers caused a crash."

Joshua Kaijankoski asks about a hard drive for his ST:

"I basically have a ton of SCSI drives and enclosures but no way of me hooking them up on the STE. Ideally I would like some SCSI adapter like Link but even a Megafire 44 would be great. Also any other HDs are fine. I don't care if it's 10MBs, as long as it's bigger than a 720K floppy and works on my STE. So Supras, Megafires, SHs are welcome. I am aware that I could get a new Link 2 for 90 some bux plus shipping. Too rich for me... I am in North Bay, Ontario, Canada."

Mark Duckworth tells Joshua:

"Actually, upon my recent contact with ICD, they no longer sell them directly (at least that is what their story to me was)."

Peter West posts this interesting little tidbit:

"I thought I'd report to the group about my solution for transferring files between a PC and my Falcon: Adaptec market a 'USBXchange' for 65 UKP that allows one SCSI drive to be connected to a Windows XP computer (more to some earlier versions). After I downloaded and installed new drivers (the package as bought was obviously too old for XP) I connected my SyQuest EZ135 to the PC, and could download to it (or copy files to it) without problems.

Originally I was going to move the SyQuest between the PC and my Falcon's SCSI chain, but I have since bought a second drive so one can stay attached to each machine and I only have to move the cartridges across.

Seeing the speed at which the PC renders some image-heavy websites is a real eye-opener. For instance a couple of the last MyAtari articles heavy with graphics took nearly 5 minutes to load on my Falcon, whereas they came up instantly on the PC. Same is true with some PDFs.

So in future I will do my web browsing on the PC, specially as it's on a much cheaper tariff, and transfer any Atari downloads etc. on the SyQuest."

Steve Sweet tells Peter:

"Bummer dude, I wish I knew you were doing this. I got a SCSI card for my windows box for half that cost, allows 7 SCSI devices to be connected, so I'm able to share my external hard drives, SCSI DAT and ZIP drives between platforms and leave my USB ports free."

Peter tells Steve:

"No good - my son doesn't want the only spare slot used up by a SCSI card. Otherwise I'd have gone for that solution. (I don't need to connect more than one SCSI device to the PC, I hope.) Since the PC has 3 USB ports, using one for the Adaptec is not a problem."

Martin Tarenskeen asks about a popular PPP application:

"When I run Gluestik a message tells me that it reads my STiK configuration file (if present). If this file isn't there it uses default settings, and it still works fine. At least on my system.

Which makes me wonder: What settings exactly does Gluestik read and use from STiK's configuration file ? Anyone ?"

Martin Byttebier tells Martin T:

"As far as I know, it reads c:\stik\_cfg\default.cfg. My cfg holds only these lines:

```
ALLOCMEM = 30000
POP_HOST = pop.pandora.be
POP_USERNAME = my username
```

POP\_PASSWORD = my password  
SMTP\_HOST = smtp.pandora.be  
FULLNAME = Martin Byttebier "

Walter Cole asks about emulating an STe:

"Is it possible to emulate an Atari STe on a PC solely with software?  
If it is, where on the WWW may I find it?

It would help if any replies could be to me at:  
cwacole@aol.com. I don't get to monitor this Atari site very often.

I've been an ST user since 1986, but find the PC's access to the  
Internet too much easier to use."

Gregory George tells Walter:

"I'm pretty sure STe emulation has been around for awhile. Check  
<http://www.emulators.com/> for GEMulator and <http://www.vg-network.com>  
for everything else."

Well folks, it's short, but there have been fewer and fewer messages in the  
NewsGroup lately. Please tune in again next week, same time, same station,  
and be ready to listen to what they are saying when...

PEOPLE ARE TALKING

=~::~~::~=

A-ONE's Headline News  
The Latest in Computer Technology News  
Compiled by: Dana P. Jacobson

#### Judge Rules on Web Pop-Up Ads

A California software company must stop delivering ads that pop up  
unauthorized when surfers visit the Web sites of several prominent media  
companies, a federal judge has ruled.

U.S. District Judge Claude Hilton in Alexandria, Va., issued the  
preliminary injunction Friday in a lawsuit that 10 media companies filed  
last month against Gator Corp. of Redwood City, Calif.

The plaintiffs, including parents of The Washington Post, The New York  
Times and USA Today, accused Gator of parasitic behavior.

No date has been set for trial.

Janet Collum, an attorney for Gator, said company officials were



considering an appeal of the injunction, confident it will win the case at trial. "We believe strongly that the facts and the law are on our side," she said.

Gator, which runs an ad network that claims 22 million active users and 400 advertisers, produces pop-up ads that appear when computer owners with its software browse Web sites targeted by Gator's advertisers.

Internet users get Gator advertising software when they install a separate product for filling out online forms and remembering passwords. Gator also comes hitched with free software from other companies, including games and file-sharing programs.

As users surf the Web, Gator runs in the background and delivers advertisements on top of what the surfer would normally get at a site.

Terence P. Ross, an attorney for the plaintiffs, said the court injunction "is an indication that the judge thinks our case does have merit."

The publishers claim Gator's practices lower their advertising revenue by directing Web surfers to competitors' sites, hiding legitimate ads and offering deals that directly compete with those of the site's paid advertisers.

Ross said Gator's practice also "causes a loss of content control," noting that Gator ads might conflict with stories on Web sites and potentially create an appearance of journalistic bias or incompetence.

But Gator likens its practice with having multiple windows from multiple applications open at once: To ban its ads would be to ban running instant messaging and a Web browser at the same time.

Last year, the Interactive Advertising Bureau threatened to file a complaint with the Federal Trade Commission over Gator's selling of ads that block out the banner ads displayed on other Web sites.

Gator responded with a federal suit in California against the trade group, seeking the court's declaration that the practice was legal. Gator ultimately agreed to stop the practice, and the lawsuit was dismissed.

### Hacker Group Targets Countries That Censor Internet

Some of the world's best-known hackers unveiled a plan this weekend to offer free software to promote anonymous Web surfing in countries where the Internet is censored, especially China and Middle Eastern nations.

An international hacker group calling itself Hactivismo released a program on Saturday called Camera/Shy that allows Internet users to conceal messages inside photos posted on the Web, bypassing most known police monitoring methods.

In addition, "Mixter," an internationally known German hacker, said Hactivismo was preparing in coming weeks to launch technology, which if adopted widely could allow anyone to create grassroots, anonymous networks where Internet users worldwide could access and share information without a trace.

"(Hackers) are looking for something a little more meaty to work with," spokesman "Oxblood Ruffin" said of the new social activist push by a group formerly known for creating software that used by other hackers to attack undefended computers.

The Hactivismo announcement, the result of a two-year project among leading hackers worldwide, was made at H2K2, a three-day conference ending Sunday. The bi-annual event attracts an estimated 2,000 security professionals and computer activists, including the U.S. hacker elite.

Mixter's software -- known as a "protocol" in technical terms -- would allow ordinary computer users to set up a decentralized version of virtual private networks (VPNs). VPNs are used by governments and many companies to create secure networks that are fenced off from the public Internet.

"It's important for anyone whether they live in totalitarian country or a Western country to be anonymous," said Mixter, who lives in Munich, of his motivation to take part in the project.

Hactivismo software works to bypass national firewalls that allow only partial access to global computer networks. A firewall is software that prevents access to certain types of addresses banned on internal corporate networks as well as nations that restrict citizens' access to the global Internet.

Hactivismo says it can defeat attempts to restrict Web surfing to controversial Internet news and human rights sites by disguising such sites to make them look innocuous.

The group hopes to encourage other software developers to embed the code for "Six/Four" protocol into their own programs in order to accelerate the spread of the technology worldwide. The effort will only succeed if millions of computer users begin using the programs as part of their everyday Internet Web use, providing cover to individual surfers, its proponents said.

The move is likely to heat up the battle between free speech activists and government censors in the 20 or so countries that restrict public access to the Web. It may also raise concerns among Western police agencies, who fear the technology could be used by criminals to swap child pornography or by Osama bin Laden's Al-Qaeda network to plot new attacks around the globe.

Hactivismo, or hacker activism, is just one of several grassroots software projects -- including Peekabooby and Privaterra -- launched recently by computer activists that seek to enable human rights workers to access censored Web sites or communicate securely.

Six/Four protocol designer "Mixter" told Reuters that the system is named in honor of the date when Chinese authorities cracked down on democracy activists in Tiananmen Square on June 4, 1989.

Six/Four is designed so that each computer user that uses software running the protocol becomes part of the shared capacity of the network, taking a page from so-called "peer-to-peer" sharing network that gave birth to Napster and other music sharing programs such as Gnutella.

"This is going to be a guerrilla information war," Oxblood Ruffin said. "Sites will pop up for a few days and then be taken down," he said as he described a "moving war," in which computer activists react quickly to

government efforts to block such programs.

In countries such as China, the Internet poses an unprecedented threat to the control that the Chinese Communist Party exercises over all other forms of media.

In the world's most populous country, where most people can't afford PCs, millions turn to Internet cafes, despite a long-running crackdown on the free-wheeling establishments by the Chinese government.

The tightening of restrictions has accelerated recently since several deadly fires, including one in a Beijing Internet cafe that killed more than 20 students in June.

Sensitivity to potential sources of civil instability have been heightened by the looming leadership transition at the top of the Chinese government set for later this year.

Hactivismo is made up of 40 or so hackers including members of the Cult of the Dead Cow, the group behind Back Orifice, which can be used by malicious hackers to gain unauthorized access to unsecured computers running Microsoft's Windows software.

Mixer developed software that was used by another teenager to launch denial of service attacks on major e-commerce sites in early 2000.

Group members have focused more recently on harnessing the energies of the computer underground to promote electronic democracy on the Internet.

In the future they plan to develop programs that will allow anonymous direct email, file trading and untraceable chat programs that bypass conventional Internet monitoring.

The latter is especially important in places like China, where online chat is more popular than Web surfing. The group's work can be found on the Internet at .

Hactivismo leaders said that Camera/Shy was immediately available for download and being using from its site. The program would allow visitors at public Internet cafes, popular in many countries where computers are scarce, to install the 1.2 megabyte program using a simple floppy disk.

The user simply installs the program on a computer, surfs the Web, then removes the program, leaving no electronic records kept of what sites were visited, said its southern California-based designer, who goes by the hacker name "Pull."

"What this is for is for pre-suspects," Pull said. "You never become a suspect if you are using this kind of thing."

#### Free Hacker Software Called Human Rights Weapon

With the assistance of a new computer program, information that once had to be smuggled on microfiche or tiny scraps of paper can now be encrypted and embedded in any ordinary GIF image file.

Hactivismo, a hacker group ostensibly dedicated to human rights, released

the program, called Camera/Shy, at the H2K2 Convention in New York last weekend. The group, whose name blends "hacking" and "activism" with a Spanish twist, is an international assemblage of hackers, activists, artists and others who purport to use technology to further global human rights.

The Camera/Shy software, available for free over the Internet, provides a means for activists to exchange banned content across the World Wide Web.

Steganography software is nothing new; several programs are currently available for encrypting and hiding data. However, most of them are designed for technically sophisticated users -- a category that excludes most human rights activists.

Oxblood Ruffin, Hacktivismo's founder, told NewsFactor: "It was important for us to design tools that would be usable by the people we were trying to help. Hence, the simple approach."

Elias Levy, chief technology officer of SecurityFocus, agreed. "What will make this program popular is that it is all integrated and easy to use," he told NewsFactor.

While other steganography programs are command line-based, Camera/Shy is embedded in a Web browser. Other programs require users to know beforehand that an image contains embedded content, but Camera/Shy allows users to check images for embedded messages, read them and embed their own return messages with the click of a mouse.

One country whose activists are most likely to be interested in Camera/Shy is China -- especially since the software is dedicated to the memory of Wang Ruowang, a former Chinese dissident leader. SecurityFocus' Levy questioned whether the Chinese government might ask antivirus companies to modify their programs to detect the new software -- in effect, treating Camera/Shy as if it were a virus.

China's government might also ask for ways to detect whether people are using the software and whether Web sites have hidden contents -- features that would be difficult but probably not impossible to provide.

"Given the size of the Chinese market and the leverage they have, it's likely that one or more companies might comply with this," Levy said.

However, Hacktivismo hopes that Camera/Shy's ease of use will encourage users to embed so many messages in innocuous and even official Web sites that governments will not be able to find and shut down all of them.

"You hide your real message in a crowd of fake messages," Hacktivismo told the H2K2 conference. "Which message is the real message?" Governments trying to defeat the program, the group argued, eventually will have to shut down their own Web sites and punish their own people who unknowingly downloaded embedded messages.

Another concern is that Camera/Shy might become a tool for terrorists and others using the Web for criminal purposes. Citing recent unsubstantiated reports that al-Qaeda may have embedded encrypted messages in Web sites, Levy said, "All tools can be used for good and bad."

Hacktivismo said it is aware of the risk but believes it is well worth taking.

"Camera/Shy advances democracy," Ruffin told NewsFactor. "Will terrorists use it? Not that likely. Will we be using it against terrorist states?... Yeah."

## Microsoft to Release New Multimedia Windows XP

Forget the keyboard and the mouse. What the newest edition of Windows XP really needs is a common household gadget -- the remote control.

Microsoft Corp. announced an addition to its flagship Windows XP series of operating systems on Tuesday, Windows XP Media Center, which aims to transform desktop computers into remote-controlled digital entertainment hubs.

The world's biggest software maker said the new entertainment-friendly edition of Windows XP will debut in stores in the United States, Canada and South Korea in time for this year's U.S. holiday season, which typically begins late November, and be packaged together with personal computers specially designed to deliver its key media features.

The PCs, to be built by Hewlett-Packard Co., Japan's NEC Corp. and Korea's Samsung Electronics Co., will have extensive digital music, video, TV and DVD video playback capability .

Remote controls shipped with the computers will feature a "Start" button just like that on all Windows desktops, which brings up a screen to replace the standard Windows graphics with a sleek, simple design that provides quick access to various entertainment media and functions.

Windows XP Media Center, formerly code-named 'Freestyle', is targeted at "digital media enthusiasts, college dorm rooms and teen bedrooms," said Jodie Cadieux, marketing manager at Microsoft's eHome division, which aims to make PCs more than just a business and communication tool.

Younger users, who are more accustomed to listening to music and watching video on computers, are more likely to appreciate having their e-mail, Internet access and digital in a complete package, Cadieux said.

Since Windows XP Media Center's features are closely tied to the hardware, it won't be available as a separate operating system. Instead, the new edition of Windows XP will ship with new mid-range PCs priced in the \$1,000 to \$2,000 category.

Redmond, Washington-based Microsoft is gearing up to release a slew of consumer-oriented products this fall, as it begins to deliver on plans to fuel further growth beyond PC-centered software.

The first major salvo into people's living rooms was launched last fall with the Xbox video game machine.

This year, Microsoft will roll out a separate advanced media player for existing Windows users, the Tablet PC for mobile pen-based computing and Mira, a wireless monitor that can be detached and used away from the desk to access the computer.

"Consumer relationships with PCs have to change," Cadieux said.

Japanese PC makers have been trying to do that for years.

Japan's Sony Corp., the world's largest audiovisual equipment maker, has been particularly keen on blending the PC, stereo and video functions and has built its own PC hardware and software to do this.

And nearly all of Japan's major PC makers sell a desktop that also doubles as a TV and video monitor.

Microsoft's push into the realm of computer-based entertainment -- the prime example being the PC-based Xbox -- represents the same effort to compete for entertainment budgets.

At the same time, Microsoft isn't giving up any ground where it dominates desktop computing.

At the slightest nudge of the mouse, Windows XP Media Center reverts back to the familiar Windows desktop and menus that have become nearly ubiquitous on PCs worldwide.

#### Apple Shows Off New Products, Warns on Economy

Apple Computer Inc. Chief Executive Steve Jobs on Wednesday unveiled new software and gadgets to win over Windows users during an economic downturn he forecast could last another nine months.

As Apple stock sank 13 percent following its disappointing results and a somber financial outlook announced on Tuesday, Jobs showed off an iPod portable music player that works with Windows and Macintosh software that will be free to new users.

But loyal Apple fans also will have to begin paying to use a ".mac" e-mail address and Internet storage and tools Apple had offered for free, sparking some dissent among users of the platform, which is seen as the pricey high end of personal computers.

Jobs told financial analysts at a meeting alongside the Macworld exposition in New York, where he introduced the new products, that the company would not cut key research spending or marketing of its new campaign to convince Windows users to switch to the Mac.

"In hindsight, this downturn is going to look like one hell of a great time to try to gain back some market share for Apple, and that is exactly what we are trying to do right now," Jobs said. Apple has struggled to increase its roughly 5 percent share of the U.S. PC market for years.

But, he added, "We play the hand we're dealt. We don't see things getting better in the next six months, probably the next nine months, and that's as far as our headlights go out."

Apple predicted a slight profit for the current quarter before potential charges that could push it to a net loss for the first time since the end of 2000, an outlook that led analysts to cut financial targets for the company.

Salomon Smith Barney also cut the rating on Apple stock to neutral from buy. Apple fell \$2.23 to close at \$15.63 on Nasdaq.

Analysts at the meeting expressed dismay at the poor "legs" of Apple's iMac, the desktop computer introduced at the beginning of the year which is shaped like a desktop lamp with a flat panel display swinging above a hemispherical base.

Revenue from the iMac fell in the quarter ended in June, a drop that Jobs blamed on a combination of the poor economy and high prices for the flat panel displays.

He also unveiled a new \$1,999 high-end iMac with a 17-inch screen, which drew sighs and howls of appreciation at Macworld. Apple left the price of its cheapest iMac at \$1,399, which many analysts call a good value but too expensive for many consumers used to cheap Microsoft Corp. Windows machines.

Some users at the "news for nerds" Web site slashdot.com said that Apple was rolling out a lot of charges.

"Some have suggested that the 'switch' in Apple's new ad campaign stands for the unfortunate part of a 'bait and switch,'" one wrote in response to the \$99 per year price tag for the .Mac tools.

Many lauded improvements to the OS X software such as improved address books and communications between computers and cell phones.

Chief Financial Officer Fred Anderson also said that there would be more new products this quarter and that Apple intended to price them competitively.

Executives said the company was holding the line on expenses, including opening smaller stores as it continues a retail roll-out begun last year.

Some analysts have also urged Apple to move to microchips from Intel Corp. from those made by Motorola Inc. and International Business Machines Corp. to cut costs.

Asked about that possibility, Jobs said that first the company had to finish the transition to the OS X operating system, expected around the end of this year.

"Then we'll have options, and we like to have options," he said.

#### Jobs: Apple's 'Jaguar' Set To Pounce

Promising to "innovate through the downturn," Apple chairman Steve Jobs kicked off Macworld New York by announcing new features that he believes will make the company's Jaguar -- version 10.2 of OS X -- a force to be reckoned with. One of his goals: persuading diehard PC users to switch to the Mac platform.

In a speech punctuated by his characteristic "cool," Jobs discussed a slew of products, features and strategies aimed at bringing Apple to the forefront of the personal computer universe.

Among the innovations were springloaded folders, which drew cheers from the assembled crowd, and a new version of QuickTime based on MPEG-4, which Jobs called the "the next most important" multimedia standard. Apple also

announced plans to replace its popular -- and free -- iTools suite with a subscription-based Internet services platform called .Mac.

Jaguar, which Apple will release on August 24th, a few weeks ahead of schedule, boasts springloaded folders that will let users quickly and easily navigate folders with a single click and that will automatically clean up the desktop in the process.

As part of what Jobs called "Internet services for the rest of us," Apple also has breathed new life into the seemingly long-forgotten Sherlock tool. Instead of having to "click and click to find what you want," Jobs said, Apple has written a more intelligent search client intended to help users find exactly what they need.

For instance, with Sherlock 3, a user could track stocks that are updated every 30 seconds without having to launch a Web browser and repeatedly refresh a page. Users also could track auctions on eBay or peruse online yellow pages.

Another new initiative called Rendezvous, also part of Jaguar, creates instant networks of computers and other devices, allowing users to communicate and share files. According to Jobs, the technology "automatically discovers other devices over an IP network with zero configuration" required.

"It's a pretty big deal," Jobs said, noting that with Rendezvous, devices not only communicate their IP addresses but also say 'here's what I do.'

In particular, Rendezvous could lift a burden from the shoulders of users who have struggled with network printers. According to Jobs, Epson, Hewlett-Packard and Lexmark already have adopted the technology.

Jaguar also will include QuickTime 6, the newest version of Apple's media player software, which is aimed at boosting the quality of online audio. Schiller stressed that listeners "can't tell the difference between [compressed QuickTime 6 files] and raw, uncompressed audio." Indeed, during the demo, there was no noticeable difference between the two.

The player reportedly offers the same quality for DVD, though it is recorded to disc at one-third the data rate.

What is more, a feature called "instant-on streaming" allows video to run on a server rather than requiring users to download it -- but it does so without the buffering that can cause delays in current server-based video streams.

Acknowledging that "the world has changed" and "you can't even get POP mail for free," Jobs said that Apple will stop offering its free iTools in favor of subscription-based .Mac technology. For US\$99.95 annually, a user can get IMAP e-mail with 15 MB of storage space and 100 MB of online storage through the company's iDisk. A Web home page builder, antivirus software and backup software also are included as part of the package.

Taking a swipe at long-time rival and sometime savior Microsoft, Jobs noted that while Microsoft "is talking about Internet services" with its .NET platform, Apple is "actually doing it" with .Mac.

Jobs' enthusiasm for Apple's latest innovations did not appear to be dimmed by the company's lackluster earnings reported the day before.



## Microsoft Revamps MSN Browser, but No Longer Free

Microsoft Corp. said on Tuesday it will launch later this year a new version of its consumer-friendly MSN Web browser and for the first time charge users who don't also subscribe to its Internet access services.

The beefed-up browser, called MSN 8, is the latest consumer-oriented product to be unveiled by the software giant this week as it prepares to launch a series of new products this year aimed at extending its reach beyond the desk and personal computer.

Microsoft said the new browser would ship with a sleek new design and an array of features that make it easier for users to manage e-mail, protect their PCs from viruses, handle digital photos and browse the Web.

It said it was the most fundamental revamp ever for its MSN set of services, which also includes Internet access and a Web portal.

In a departure from previous practice, Microsoft said it would offer MSN 8 as a separate subscription for users who don't already use MSN Internet access services. The company introduced the MSN browser as an alternative to its dominant Internet Explorer software, which will remain free.

Microsoft declined to say how much the subscription would cost, but charging consumers for a browser would be another step significant break with the Internet's "free" culture.

The new version of MSN comes at a time when most Internet service providers (ISPs) are dealing with a slowdown in their dial-up subscriber bases and are focusing on providing high-speed services, which they hope will generate more revenue.

Market leader America Online, a unit of AOL Time Warner Inc. is suffering from a sharp decline in advertising spending, slower-than-expected migration of its members to high-speed services and a brake in subscriber growth.

One of the key MSN features that Microsoft expects family household users to appreciate are an extensive set of parental controls capable of blocking e-mail, instant messages, file-sharing and specific Web sites.

Fears of crime borne over the Internet have let many parents in the United States to call for more stringent monitoring of children's activities and access on the Web.

"Now the parent is totally in control of their child's experience on the Web," said MSN Marketing Director Bob Visse.

MSN 8 even has the ability to generate an online activity report and a feature to request parental permission for certain sites.

MSN also features a new item called a "dashboard" that replaces the bookmark and media file menus that pop up on the left side of Internet Explorer.

Designed to display a variety of information and media, the dashboard can also be moved off the browser and onto the Windows desktop for constant

access to communication and media functions.

To deliver on Microsoft's promise of making its products more secure and trustworthy, MSN includes virus protection and a firewall to prevent intrusion from the Internet.

The Redmond, Washington-based software firm indicated that it would continue to operate Internet access services, but in Europe it is adopting a slightly different tactic.

Microsoft is pulling a page from AOL's playbook, introducing a "bring-your-own-access" plan in Europe in an effort to crack into a crowded online access market that is still showing signs of healthy growth.

Microsoft has said it is no longer interested in operating a Web portal and ISP in Europe, as it currently does in the United States.

But it said it would like to tap into the European access market, developing revenue-sharing arrangements by which ISPs could use the popular MSN portal, which claims 35 million European visitors per month, as a start page for their access services.

"There's no deals to announce right now but we see this as a real opportunity," said Benjamin Schmittzehe, business manager for MSN 8 in London.

He said such a plan would be rolled out in the UK later this fall and the rest of Europe in 2003, in line with the introduction of MSN 8 in those markets.

#### Apple's .Mac Challenges Microsoft's .NET

Chiding Microsoft for talking a good ball game regarding Internet services while Apple actually takes action, Apple CEO Steve Jobs announced at the MacWorld Expo in New York that Apple would convert its free iTools suite into subscription-based .Mac Web services.

Noting that nothing is free anymore, Jobs pointed out that Apple's move into Internet services will cost users US\$100 per year for 15 MB of IMAP/POP mail storage and 100 MB of Internet-based storage. The storage will be built into the Mac's OS X Finder and located on Apple's iDisk Internet servers.

In addition, subscribers will have access to a Web site creation tool, antiviral software and back-up software.

But Jobs' case for "Internet services for the rest of us" glossed over the high prices Apple is demanding for its newest innovations, including .Mac and the soon-to-be-released Jaguar OS X version 10.2. Jaguar will cost \$129, or "less than a dollar for each feature," as Jobs put it.

.Mac will let users "access mail anywhere from Mac.com," said Jobs. And its iCal software will let users share calendars with friends, coworkers and family.

Jobs emphasized what he sees as the growing importance of being able to share calendar information quickly.

"Modern life fills multiple calendars," Jobs said, and with iCal, users can see all the calendars that matter at once. "It publishes changes automatically."

With a single button, users can post calendars automatically and drag in items from other calendars.

Designed for use on Mac OS X 10.1.3 or higher with 128 MB SDRAM and an internal CD-RW or DVD-R drive allowing creation of backup disks, .Mac also requires users to employ Microsoft Internet Explorer 5 or a later version.

Mac OS 9 users can take advantage of the iDisk, HomePage, antivirus protection, iCards and Mac.com's email features.

Jobs noted that iTools has grown in popularity, doubling its user base from 1.1 million to 2.2 million, but claimed it has outlived its usefulness as a free suite of tools. Thus, he said, "as of September 30th, iTools is going away." Users can take a free trial run on .Mac before buying.

Jobs is clearly hopeful that with .Mac, Apple can steal some of Microsoft's thunder in the Internet services market. His jabs during his Macworld keynote speech were aimed at Microsoft's long-promised but yet-to-be-seen .NET platform.

Apple has taken numerous hits for charging a premium for its computers, software and other offerings. Some see this latest charge for services that were once free as another example of Apple believing its users will pay top dollar for what they perceive to be a superior product.

"Apple typically charges a premium because they feel customers are getting better technology," said Alan Gillen, research director of system software at research firm IDC.

The company is following a trend set by companies such as Microsoft and Yahoo, which also have attached price tags to services that once were free.

That is probably part of the bigger trend, said Gillen, of "looking at software as a service, not as a product."

And Apple's slipping financials, as illustrated in its latest lackluster earnings report, underscore the company's need to milk revenue from whatever products and sectors it can.

#### Will Alternative Web Browsers Ever Unseat Microsoft?

Some analysts scoff at the very idea of alternative Web browsers -- any alternative, that is, to the dominant Microsoft Internet Explorer.

However, other browsers offer users some attractive features in addition to freedom from Microsoft, including speed, versatility, reduced hard drive footprint and ease of use.

Browsers such as Mozilla, Opera, OmniWeb, Chimera and iCab have followers who swear by their speed and functionality. And there are a number of other more minor players, many of which can be used either for free or for a small shareware fee.

Clearly, the number of alternative browsers indicates that developers have recognized the small but growing demand for alternatives to Internet Explorer.

The most popular of the alternative bunch -- Mozilla, Opera and OmniWeb -- have steadily moved toward multiplatform deployment -- if they have not yet achieved it -- with the aim of making their browsers available on the three main platforms: Windows, Mac and Linux.

However, the near-extinction of once-dominant Netscape has created a great deal of uncertainty about any browser's ability to challenge Internet Explorer's overwhelming market share.

Microsoft is well-known in the industry for incorporating the best features of competing software, then offering the same features in a free Microsoft product.

Part of the Microsoft antitrust case centered on complaints about the company's practice of forcing users to keep the Internet Explorer icon on the Windows desktop or risk destabilizing their computers.

The practice helped Internet Explorer overtake Netscape Navigator in the late 1990s, and go on to seize the lion's share of the browser market.

"[Internet Explorer] is there. It's free. It generally works. And lots of sites are optimized for it," Gartner analyst David Smith told NewsFactor. "Given those things, you have incredible inertia. People don't want to change."

Despite the drive to make alternative browsers faster and more user-friendly than Internet Explorer, few people seriously believe there is much chance of a browser battle that could adversely affect Internet Explorer's 95-percent share of the market.

Yankee Group senior analyst Rob Perry told NewsFactor that because Internet Explorer is "part of the [Windows] package and will continue to be, for the bulk of users in the future," even Netscape has "a challenge to remain on the desktop."

However, the courts could have an impact as possible monopoly penalties against Microsoft include the forced release of an operating system that does not include the company's Internet Explorer browser.

Still, alternative browsers -- such as Opera, which claims to be the fastest browser on the planet -- capitalize on their differences from Internet Explorer.

Opera chief executive officer Jon von Tetzner told NewsFactor that the Norwegian company's browser uses multiple browser windows, keyboard shortcuts and other technologies to help speed Web browsing.

"We focus on size and we focus on speed of operation," he said.

While Internet Explorer, Netscape Navigator and Opera are all available for the Macintosh platform, Omni Group touts its OmniWeb browser as the browser of choice for Apple computer users.

The next version of OmniWeb, expected in early 2003, already has Mac users excited at the prospect of faster, better rendering.

Meanwhile, the Mozilla open source group recently released the first full version of its browser, which has been widely praised for breaking new ground in CSS (cascading style sheet) and page rendering.

Mozilla is the basis for its faster cousin, Chimera, as well as for the latest version of Netscape Navigator.

And, both Omni Group and the Mozilla open source group plan to incorporate variations of the Linux-inspired tabbed browsing.

Opera has recently announced deals to distribute its Linux browser with versions of the open source operating system from SuSE and Mandrake.

"[The deal with] Mandrake, and a similar deal with SuSE, means we are starting to get into Linux distribution to make our browser easier to access and more visible to our users," Opera's von Tetzner said.

Yankee Group's Perry said that alternative browsers might get a push from the increasing popularity of different desktop environments, such as Linux.

"As alternative desktops grow, [alternative browsers] will be the preferred platform," Perry said.

Opera's von Tetzner, referring to another recent deal on Web development products with Macromedia, said he expects more deals to be made to increase Opera's visibility in the Macintosh community, though Opera's largest audience is made up of Windows users.

"This means a lot of Web designers will use Opera to test Web pages," von Tetzner said of the Macromedia deal. "That's going to change the equation somewhat."

Omni Group president William Jon Shipley told NewsFactor recently that the company, which remains loyal to Apple, expects to capitalize on Microsoft's expected movement away from Apple.

Whether any of the many new browsers -- such as iCab and OmniWeb, which cost in the range of US\$20 to \$30 -- will be able to make any headway against the dominance of Microsoft remains to be seen.

Clearly, one of the biggest disadvantages to alternative browsers is that many of the better ones charge fees. And, in order to keep new versions coming out, developers have little choice but to charge.

And if users will not pay, it will be very difficult to take market share from Internet Explorer, which is likely to continue to be free.

#### Yahoo Admits Changing E-Mail Text to Block Hackers

If you ever used Yahoo! mail to ask a potential employer to "evaluate" your resume, they might have concluded your grasp of the English language was insufficient for the job.

Yahoo! Inc. confirmed on Wednesday that its e-mail software has automatically changed certain words -- including evaluate -- in a bid to

prevent hackers from spreading viruses.

Although the company declined to list the words its software had been changing, a report on the technology news Web site, News.com, reported that the program changes "mocha" to "espresso," and the phrase "eval" to "review."

"Evaluate," then, becomes, "reviewuate," and that job application doesn't look so polished anymore.

A spokeswoman for Yahoo said the word-changing program was just one of several practices the company takes to ensure the security of its e-mail.

The problem with words like mocha, she said, is that along with describing a flavor and a color, it is a special command in the JavaScript computer language, which hackers may intercept to launch malicious programs.

Aside from a general list of e-mail guidelines, which states that Yahoo will take measures to insure tight security, the company had not previously disclosed the word-changing practice to e-mail users.

While some security experts, including Alex Shipp of the e-mail filtering company MessageLabs, said Yahoo's practice was a reasonable tactic to keep its e-mail secure, others noted that they knew of no other e-mail services that were changing the text in messages.

"It looks to me like it's just buggy software," said Richard Smith, who runs the Web security site ComputerBytesMan.com. Smith said companies typically intercept hackers by blocking certain underlying computer code, but not the actual text of the messages.

A spokeswoman for Microsoft Corp. said its free e-mail service, HotMail, blocks certain pieces of software code that may be used by hackers, without interfering with any of the actual words contained in the e-mail messages.

Searches of such non-English words like "reviewuate" and "medireview" -- changed from "medieval" -- produce thousands of results on the Internet search engine Google ( news - external web site), offering some indication of how often Yahoo's mail system has replaced words.

However, a test message Wednesday on Yahoo mail transmitted the words "mocha" and "evaluate" with no changes. Yahoo was not immediately available to say whether or when it had changed its practices.

#### Virus Distributes Via E-Mail

A new e-mail-borne worm discovered Monday targets Microsoft Windows and sends messages to addresses found in the Windows Address Book.

The worm arrives by mail with the subject line -Re: your password!- and exploits vulnerabilities to execute when the recipient reads or previews the file. The worm sleeps for several hours, and then copies itself to a Windows directory so it can be executed each time Windows is started.

The worm is called W32.Frethem.K@mm. It uses its own Simple Mail Transfer Protocol engine to send itself to e-mail addresses that it finds in the

Microsoft Windows Address Book and in .dbx, .wab, .mbx, .eml, and .mdb files. It doesn't affect Unix, Macintosh, or Linux systems.

Security software vendor Symantec rates its potential damage low, but distribution high because of the possibility of large-scale e-mail distribution.

#### HP Fires Two, Suspends 150, for Email Abuse

Computer and printer maker Hewlett-Packard Co. has suspended approximately 150 staff in Britain and Ireland and dismissed two for inappropriate use of company email, the company said on Wednesday. It would not say in detail what they did wrong, but the move comes as firms are widely cracking down on employees' use of email to distribute pornography and tasteless jokes.

The fate of the suspended full-time employees will be determined following a company investigation, a spokeswoman said. HP said approximately 60 permanent employees and 90 contract staff have been suspended.

A majority of the contract employees, many of which were outsourced from other companies, have been asked to leave HP offices, the company said.

"HP can confirm that this involves the viewing and sharing of unauthorized and inappropriate material," a statement from HP said.

Jim Kent, general manager for HP in the UK and Ireland, said two employees in a Scotland office have been dismissed so far. He added that HP considers it a company violation, but not a criminal matter.

#### AOL Used Unconventional Business Practices

America Online Inc. boosted its revenue figures through unconventional deals from 2000 to 2002, before and after its acquisition of Time Warner Inc., the Washington Post reported on Thursday.

A chart printed in conjunction with the Post article shows a total of \$270.1 million in unconventional deals.

The newspaper said it reviewed hundreds of pages of confidential AOL documents and interviewed current and former company officials and their business partners to produce the report.

A spokesman for AOL, which completed its merger with Time Warner in 2001 to form AOL Time Warner in a \$106.2 billion deal, said the story was "flawed in its facts and analysis and misleading in its conclusion."

According to the Post article:

-- "AOL converted legal disputes into ad deals;

-- "It negotiated a shift in revenue from one division to another, bolstering its online business.

-- "It sold ads on behalf of online auction giant eBay Inc. , booking the

sale of eBay's ads as AOL's own revenue.

-- "AOL bartered ads for computer equipment in a deal with Sun Microsystems Inc.

-- "AOL counted stock rights as ad and commerce revenue in a deal with a Las Vegas firm called PurchasePro.com Inc.

"AOL also found ways to turn the dot-com collapse to its advantage, renegotiating long-term ad contracts it risked losing into short-term gains that boosted its quarterly revenue," the Post reported.

The accounting and business practices resulted from worries over impending loss of advertising revenue and market unease over the health of Internet companies, the Post said.

"In such an atmosphere, and with its takeover of Time Warner Inc. imminent, AOL sought to maintain its breakneck growth in advertising and commerce revenue," the newspaper reported.

In October 2000, the Post said, just a week before AOL President Robert Pittman publicly denied that AOL was feeling an industry-wide slowdown in advertising, shares of Yahoo! Inc. tumbled 21 percent after that company, a key AOL competitor, said that strong ad growth could not be sustained.

What's more, AOL's shares lost 17 percent the day before Pittman spoke, apparently on similar worries, the Post said.

Robert O'Connor, then vice president of finance for AOL's advertising division, told the Post he outlined concerns in a series of meetings with top executives in 2001 and this year.

"Clearly, a lot of what they were living on was revenue that was not of the highest quality. I don't know if they're still in denial, but there were some pretty big business issues they were not willing to face.

"For nine months, I tried to get these guys out of denial. I tried to take the perfume off the pig," O'Connor told the newspaper. He resigned in March.

In response to the Post investigation, AOL replied that "the deals were handled properly and the company 'maintained a strict and effective system of internal controls.'"

AOL also told the Post "the total revenue represented by all the deals reviewed by The Post were 'truly microscopic' -- less than 2 percent of AOL's overall revenue, including subscriber fees -- and therefore immaterial to the company's business."

AOL Time Warner spokesman John Buckley told Reuters that accounting for the transactions differently "would have had no impact on the company's net income."

"AOL's independent auditor, Ernst & Young, has confirmed in writing that the accounting and related financial statement disclosure for all of the transactions were appropriate and in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles," Buckley said.



=~==~==

Atari Online News, Etc. is a weekly publication covering the entire Atari community. Reprint permission is granted, unless otherwise noted at the beginning of any article, to Atari user groups and not for profit publications only under the following terms: articles must remain unedited and include the issue number and author at the top of each article reprinted. Other reprints granted upon approval of request. Send requests to: [dpj@atarinews.org](mailto:dpj@atarinews.org)

No issue of Atari Online News, Etc. may be included on any commercial media, nor uploaded or transmitted to any commercial online service or internet site, in whole or in part, by any agent or means, without the expressed consent or permission from the Publisher or Editor of Atari Online News, Etc.

Opinions presented herein are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the staff, or of the publishers. All material herein is believed to be accurate at the time of publishing.